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the division of the Roman world into Italy and the Empire, each with peculiar administrative principles and machinery ; (2) the division of the Empire into senatorial provinces and imperial provinces ; (3) the two treasuries ; (4) the two sets of officials. But Firth supposes that the dyarchy fell at the accession of Tiberius, if not before, whereas writers generally continue it to Domitian or even to Aurelian. For the right understanding of this subject it is advantageous to separate the arbitrary acts of the emperors from the legitimate working of the constitution. This discrimination is necessary, especially as the period of the early Empire was one in which usurpation and tyranny were easy.

The final chapter of each book is devoted to the great enigma — the character and aims of Augustus. Firth minutely analyzes the first emperor's character ; Shuckburgh, avoiding detail, finds space for a brief estimate of the intimate friends of Augustus. Firth, more ready than Shuckburgh to accept the gossip of Suetonius, discovers in the emperor a combination of loose morality and asceticism. Both authors, while bearing in mind the hypocrisy of his position, rightly appreciate the substantial nature of his achievements. Firth says in conclusion :

He knitted together the Roman world, east and west, into one great organisation of which the emperor stood as the supreme head. He set his legions upon the distant frontiers and their swords formed a wall of steel, within which commerce and peace might flourish. . . . Augustus started the Roman world on a new career. He made it realise its unity for the first time. That was his life-work, and its consequences remain to this day.

On the whole, Shuckburgh treats the subject more objectively, and is perhaps a little more careful in his statement of facts, though Firth's book will doubtless prove more interesting to the general reader. Both writers, however, are attractive as well as scholarly, and their works will certainly be helpful to all who are interested in Augustus and his age.

GEORGE WILLIS BOTSFORD.

An Introduction to the History of Western Europe. By JAMES HARVEY ROBINSON, Professor of History in Columbia University. (Boston : Ginn and Company. 1903. Pp. x, 714.)

IN the opinion of the writer this is the best manual of general European history which has yet appeared in English. And the reason for Professor Robinson's comparative success in the impossible task of compressing into seven hundred readable pages a clear account of the chief events and movements of European history from the barbarian invasions of the fifth century to the formation of the kingdom of Italy and the German Empire appears to be the consistent application to his task of two principles — omission and emphasis. Mr. Robinson has proved the sincerity of the opinion expressed in his preface, that most elementary manuals of history mention too many men and too many facts, and has avoided producing a book which by expecting the student to learn too much runs the danger of teaching him nothing. The author's omissions

are a relief to the teacher. He has secured his emphasis upon the chief events and personages by expansion, which is the surest method. An extremely attentive student will remember that a thing is important if he is told that it is; a very acute student, diligent or lazy, will find out the important things in a book or a lecture for himself; but the average student is not apt to be extremely attentive or very acute, and instinctively judges the relative importance of different parts of any extended course of instruction by the time or space given to them. It is necessary of course to train students away from the habit of mental relaxation which produces this instinctive judgment, but Mr. Robinson is wise to take full account of the general attitude of the average mind and to expand his narrative when he comes to movements of such capital importance as the schisms of the sixteenth century and the French Revolution.

The insistence upon personality by careful and comparatively full accounts of the character and work of the chief actors in the story of western Europe is also an advantage of this manual. In giving historical instruction it is wise to emphasize great men, because they make the ages in which they live and also because they are made by them. It is doubly wise to do this in elementary instruction, because to personify causes and effects in a character which is both result and agent is often the easiest way to make a small amount of information about them understandable and memorable to the average mind.

The most marked advantage which this book has over its predecessors is that it gives a proper amount of space to the history of the Church. The writer makes clear that the life of the men of the middle ages was largely dominated by the nature of their religion and complicated by the organization of the Church to which they all belonged. He appreciates the difficulty which American students have in understanding a religion organized in a form which gave to churchmen many of the functions we think of as belonging to the state. No other text-book, so far as the writer knows, makes this side of the life of the middle ages so clear. It seems, however, that Professor Robinson has failed to make sufficiently plain the corruption of the Church, not only in its members, but in its head previous to the reforms of the eleventh century. Although he is quite right in suggesting that it is possible to emphasize too much its corruption by failing to insist upon the usefulness which kept it alive even in the ages of debasement. It would appear also that some mention should be made of the monastic reforms which preceded the reform of the papacy, and of the great influence of monks in restoring the ideal of the vicar of Christ. It would also have been well to define the right of sanctuary and its relation to the civil law. Mention of the ascetic ideal and its relation to monasticism should not have been omitted. The relations of the Church and the Empire, as the main thread of the narrative, would more naturally precede the accounts of the development of the French and English monarchies and serve as a sort of chronological scale against which the student could easily make cross-sections, so as to synchronize in his mind the events of the different lines followed in dif-

ferent chapters. In general the writer would suggest a little stronger emphasis on chronology. Parallel tables of kings, emperors, and popes, with the important names used in the book printed in larger type, might be useful. And a simple continuous list of dates of the events and personages mentioned, like the list of dates in Freeman's little handbook of European history, would be an advantage. The backbone of a beginner's knowledge of history is chronology in the sense of the order of succession; and the dates a student learns and forgets do him a large amount of good. Forgotten information is one element of culture.

The chief defect of the book is an exaggeration of one of its merits. The instructor who handles it must be on his guard against the danger of leaving a vague impression on the pupil's mind. Conditions during past ages—that is what we need to know of course; but the beginner before he can understand conditions must first know what has happened and when it happened. Mr. Robinson could have improved his book by trying somewhat more to show conditions by relating events. The dramatic instinct with all its danger of perverting truth is a thing to be used in the teaching of history.

The English of the book is commendable, though there are evidences of haste in an occasional clumsy arrangement of dependent clauses, sometimes amounting to squinting construction. There are a few instances of vagueness, such as, "The gradual bettering of conditions was due chiefly to general progress," etc.—which might mean almost anything. And there is an occasional expletive use of such adjectives as fair, brave, doughty, wonderful. The author has a way of mentioning by anticipation persons and things not yet explained, which would be confusing to some students and is no real gain. And it might be suggested that the book would be stronger if the author omitted most of the general paragraphs which foretell what he is going to say. The space thus gained could be used for some things that would strengthen the narrative. For example, the Hohenstaufens are brought very abruptly upon the scene in the person of Barbarossa. It might be well to suggest briefly where they came from. The history of Sicily is given in two foot-notes. The only mention of the Swiss confederacy is in a page of retrospect at the beginning of the account of Zwingli's schism. Whether the author thinks that those particular things ought to go in or not, certainly there are historical facts more important than some of his general paragraphs, which are repeated in the narrative in more impressive form. The scale of the narrative is one of the strong points of the book. But occasionally the author is not quite up to his own high standard in maintaining it. For example, the account of the German schism is in places expanded in a way which in so very condensed an account amounts to repetition, *e. g.* page 399 compared with page 409. And, on the other hand, the entire settlement of the *modus vivendi* in Germany and how it came about is condensed into a page. It might also be said of the admirable account of the French Revolution, that in one or two places the author gives too many details for the scale of his narrative. But all these are comparatively slight defects in a strong piece of work.

The illustrations are not entirely successful. The cathedral doors on page 342 are too small to show what they were intended to show. One or two compartments from each, enlarged, would show it better. And many of the portraits are so poor that it would be far better to omit them.

PAUL VAN DYKE.

The Arab Conquest of Egypt and the last Thirty Years of the Roman Dominion. BY ALFRED J. BUTLER. (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Henry Frowde. 1902. Pp. xxxvii, 563.)

THERE are few periods in Mohammedan history so obscure as the years during which the conquest of Egypt took place. This is the more surprising in view of the completeness in detail of what has been handed down to us concerning the life of the founder of the new faith and the early years of its upbuilding. Even where Mohammedan annalists disagree and contradict each other, a little acumen and some historical discernment enable us to unravel the skein. The one great exception is Egypt. Here the primal facts are disputed and the leading dates uncertain. This may be due to the fact that very few of the classical and Arabic authorities who wrote on Egypt or who mentioned events occurring there really knew much about the country itself; the earliest Arabic writers lived a hundred years after the conquest; and the most learned of them, such as al-Makrizi, al-Suyuti, and Ibn Dukmak (all of the fifteenth century) are more topographers than historians; and the sources from which they drew were already in their day much troubled. The lacuna might have been filled by the works of Coptic writers; but only a small part of this literature has come down to us. The publication by Zotenberg in 1879 of the chronicle of the Coptic Bishop John of Nikiu, a good and reliable account of one who was born just a little too late to be an eyewitness of the conquest itself, is the foundation-stone upon which every reconstruction of this history must be built. Unfortunately it has come down to us incomplete and muddled and only in an Ethiopic version. Mr. Butler laments "the slightness of his acquaintance with Arabic," a circumstance which might have worked havoc with one who has had to deal so much with Arabic authorities, did not translations abound as well as helpful translators. And withal, Mr. Butler has occasionally slipped. The great historical work of Tabari he knows only from Zotenberg's French translation of the Persian rendering; otherwise he would not say (p. 326) that the treaty of Amr with Alexandria is only known from the Tabari quotation in Ibn Khaldun. Even one who runs may read it in the Leyden edition, Part I., p. 2588. Nor would he say (p. 66) that according to Tabari the Persian king Chosroes "issued an edict allowing the Christians in his dominions to restore their churches and to make converts of the Magians if they could." The text reads, "to restore their churches and permitted any one to go over to their church who wanted to do so, *except the Magians*"; which is much more intelligible as, according to Zoroastrian teaching, apostacy was punished by death (Nöldeke, *Geschichte der Perser und Araber*, 287). The date